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# THE CASH ROOM

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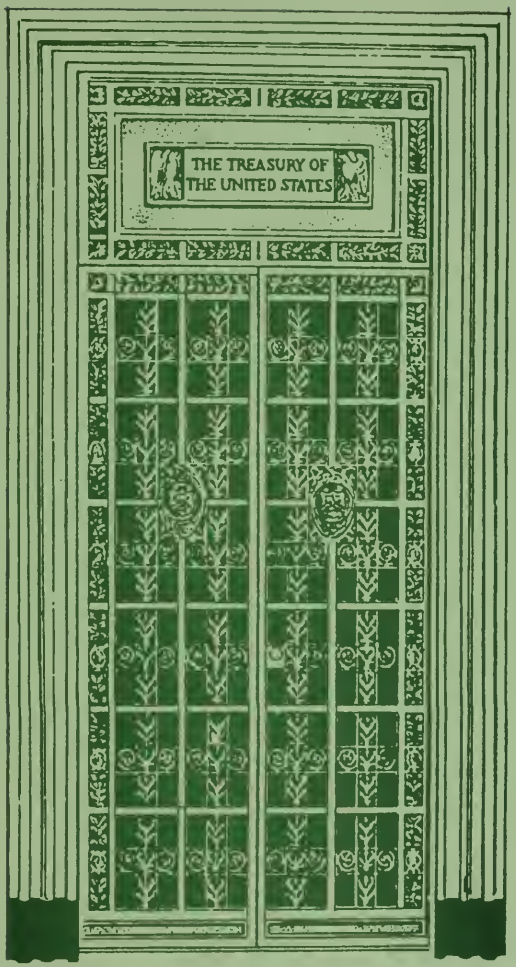


# THE CASH ROOM

U.S. Department of the Treasury
Fiscal Service
May 1990

# FOREWORD

The Cash Room opened in June 1869 in the United States Treasury Department for the transaction of the Government's financial business. The need for a bank in the Treasury Building arose indirectly from a reform of the country's monetary system in 1846 and from subsequent developments during the Civil War.

Between 1791 and 1836, government funds had been deposited into and distributed by a large government-controlled central bank--the First Bank of the United States, and later, the Second Bank. However, a large segment of the public distrusted the power of a central bank and in 1836 the charter of the Second Bank was allowed to expire. The Government turned instead to many state-chartered banks to handle its funds. That same year Federal revenues soared due to the sale of government lands. Large government deposits into state banks prompted wild speculation and an extension of credit which resulted in a panic in 1837. In order to stabilize the banking system and improve financial services for the Government, the Congress established the Independent Treasury System in 1846, making the Treasury Department solely responsible for the first handling of public monies. A system of sub-treasuries was established in larger cities around the country for the collection, safekeeping, transfer, and disbursement of public revenue. The Cash Room, after its completion in 1869, provided these services in Washington.

At the time of the Civil War, each state-chartered bank issued its own bank notes, making financial transactions cumbersome. Amidst this chaotic situation, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase organized in 1863 the National Currency Bureau, forerunner of today's Bureau of Engraving and Printing, to print "greenbacks" to finance the war. This paper currency was not backed by specie (i.e., gold or silver) and it was very difficult for the Federal Government to secure the public's confidence in such a currency. In these circumstances, an ample and impressive banking facility in the Treasury Building that would inspire trust in the Government's greenbacks was deemed desirable. The new Cash Room, completed in 1869, was to become a symbol of the integrity of the new currency system; its marble walls signified the stability of the U.S. dollar and its operations would be open to public scrutiny from its bronze balcony.

Because of its beauty and convenience, the public took advantage of the services offered in the Cash Room. Often the line at the paying teller's window would stretch out to Pennsylvania Avenue. Changes made to modernize and meet the demands posed by the great numbers of patrons were not always attractive, and they contributed to a general deterioration in the appearance of the room that occurred over years of wear and tear.

By the 1970's, the Fiscal Service, the Treasury component responsible for the operation of the Cash Room, determined the costs of operating the facility and maintaining its staff and security could no longer be justified. The availability of numerous other financial institutions in the city and the growing use of direct deposit of government checks into individual accounts lessened the need for the Department to support a banking facility. Cash Room services ceased on June 30, 1976. The tellers' cages, countertop, and its base were removed and put in storage.

In 1985, a renewed appreciation of the Cash Room's historic significance enabled the Treasury Department to begin restoration. With a combination of Federal support and private funds raised by the Committee for the Preservation of the Treasury Building, the room was slowly returned to its former splendor. The bronze gaslight chandeliers, which had apparently been scrapped around 1890 at the time electricity was introduced into the building, have been replicated from numerous historic photographs. Paint analysis on the ceiling revealed original gold-leaf highlighting under four dingy layers of paint and the ceiling was regilded. Removal of fluorescent light fixtures, which had irreparably damaged the white marble of the balcony soffit, exposed beautiful decorative bronzework. Original wooden doors, transoms, and radiator-grill covers were replicated to replace stylistically inappropriate modern substitutes. A new heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning system was installed. Due to excessive wear, the remains of the original floor could not be restored, so a new floor was laid in the original pattern and materials, red Lisbon and Italian Carrara marble.

# THE CASH ROOM

## AN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The Treasury Building, an exemplar of Greek Revival architecture contains a marble-splendored room designed and decorated at the onset of the Gilded Age. The room is commonly known as the Cash Room in spite of bronze plates centered over a triad of entrance gates labeling it "The Treasury of the United States." The grandiloquence is an appropriate reminder that the room is the place where tellers of the Treasurer of the United States meet due obligations of the United States with cash, once even to the exchange of new money for old. It is the building's only public room.

It is situated in the building's north wing on what was once known as the entrance story floor, since 1910 the second floor. Entering from Pennsylvania Avenue, Cash Room patrons walked across the Treasury's north platform, passed James E. Fraser's sculpture of Albert Gallatin, mounted a short flight of steps to enter the north portico, and stepped into the building lobby. Across the wing's east-west corridor are the Cash Room's three entrances, all bronze-gated since 1928.

Visitors enter through either of the outer doorways to find themselves encircled by the splendors of the Cash Room. Its magnitude appears to exceed its dimensions: 72 feet long, 32 feet wide, and two stories high. Except for windows in the south side and doors to adjoining rooms, the walls are mantled in marble. Marble panels alternate with twin sets of marble pilasters in two tiers, above and below the bronze balcony which runs around the entire room at the second floor. Undoubtedly, the narrow gallery, accented brightly by troffers of fluorescent tubing along the room's perimeter under the bronzework, contribute illusionary height to the room. High above is the plastered ceiling set off in coffer-like square and rectangular areas by elaborate beaming. Greek frets edge the beams. A cornice of semicircular shells of molded plaster rings the entablature of the entire upper wall. The floor, too, is marble tiling set in a red, white, and black pattern. Patrons did their business at grilled and pedimented windows mounted in a screen of bronze-framed glass rising from a marble counter which divided the Cash Room lobby from the work area.

The Cash Room is rich in its "General Grant stylishness," a phrase William Walton, former Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, coined for the Old Executive Office Building.

Mullett became its Architect two years after the Cash Room's unveiling. The building, long famous as State, War, and Navy, stood in such robust contrast to the Greek Revival Treasury that schemes in an incessant flow were aimed at either emasculating its exterior by dressing it in chaste and classic Greek or

demolishing it. That the Cash Room presents an equal contrast to the columned, pedimented, and porticoed granite exterior of the Treasury has never awakened an equal hue and cry for the room's mutilation. Its "General Grant stylishness," an epitome of the Gilded Age, has survived.

## II. GRANT'S INAUGURATION BALL

More than Gilded Age styling has linked General Ulysses S. Grant to the Cash Room. He was the premier guest at a reception in the room on the night of March 4, 1869, the near blizzardy day on which he took the oath of office for his first term as eighteenth President of the United States. Commentators have chosen from the day itself to call the event a ball, and historians have ignored the fiction that the affair was a reception for the President and Mrs. Grant and Vice-President and Mrs. Colfax. The confusion of reality and pretense stamped the ball from its start, with the atmosphere of fiasco which historian Allan Nevins has said "curiously presaged the history of the next eight years."

Arranging the event as a reception had surrealistic coloring that seemed to defy rationality. The device, in the eyes of the New York Times correspondent, had been a planned escape from the necessity of inviting President Andrew Johnson, soon to leave office. Making the ball a reception, so the Times reporter inferred, erased the event from the official Inaugural program in which balls had become traditional and in which the predecessor President had an automatic role. To heighten the innovative character of the reception a committee completely separate from the Inaugural management was established. Popular commentators close in time to the event elected in their reminiscences to ignore what may have seemed a meaningless difference and described the affair as a ball. The interpretation given currency in the New York Times attested, however, the acrimony which colored the attitude of radical Republicans toward the President they had tried unsuccessfully to convict in an impeachment trial.

Nothing of this kind was inferred in the Senate where the prospective Inaugural ball was twice discussed in January, on the 13th and 30th. Both times the Senate voted down a proposed joint resolution which would have allowed the Inauguration Committee to hold the ball in the rotunda of the Capitol. Republicans joined Democrats to defeat the legislation by 31 to 22 and 29 to 21 in nonpartisan voting. Republicans pressed the vocal opposition while Democrats for the most part maintained a discreet silence. Roscoe Conkling of New York, an acknowledged Republican radical, struck perhaps the most responsive chord when he abandoned an earlier argument that the proposal for a ball in the Capitol was "in the worst taste" for a more telling stroke:

> On inauguration day and every other day it is not the privilege but the right of all citizens of this country ... to visit the rotunda of the Capitol ... and unless the Senate should pass this resolution they will not have to pay any committee ten dollars or any other admission fee for the privilege ....

Washington's politically oriented society had been shaken by the Senate votes. The New York Times pointed out:

> For six weeks Inauguration Ball has evenly divided the daily Washington gossip with the question respecting the incoming Cabinet. "Who will compose the Cabinet?" -- "Are we to have a ball?" were questions fraught with weighty moment, and however insignificant the latter question may seem to the nation at large, it was, to your true Washington small-talker, a matter of serious consequence.

Conkling had proved knowledgeable in citing $10 as the fee for a ticket. It admitted the holder and "two ladies." Tickets adhered to the fiction of a reception but "whispered," the Times reported, "with plain type in parentheses (Dancing)." The dance program did more than whisper. Its list of 30 dances was a medley of round and square dances. Lancers, quadrilles, and promenades, however, outnumbered waltzes, polkas, and schottisches.

Two days after the Senate first turned down the resolution, Mullett betrayed that he was aware that a current could carry the Inauguration ball into the north wing and its Cash Room. Neither was finished on January 15, even though Mullett had long nursed the ambition to complete the Treasury Extension work before December 31, 1868. Apparently, the Architect was the target of cautious inquiry about the availability of the wing and the room for festivities contemplated for March 4. Certainly an ebullient Mullett promised completion in time. In the end he did not make it, but the Stars and Stripes camouflaged the chief failure amid admiration of the patriotic display. Mullett's promise was visible in a circumspect conclusion to a letter the Architect wrote on January 15 to Henry Parry, a New York marble dealer, who was, by then, the principal source of Cash Room stone. Typically, Parry was in arrears on deliveries, and letters and telegrams intended to spur stone forward, often by threatening penalties, were a sizeable part of Mullett's correspondence. In this particular letter, Mullett noted that the Treasury needed a steady supply of marble to keep a crew of marble setters busy in the Cash Room, especially as they had been assured continuous employment. Mullett threatened that any loss of time due to a supply deficiency--in effect, for wages paid for nonworking time --would be charged to Parry. Mullett capped the warning with a single cryptic sentence: "The room must be finished by the 4th

of March." Whether or not Parry understood the message, it was the first intimation in the records of the Supervising Architect that the Treasury Department would be the host for the Inauguration ball.

In another exhortation to Parry on January 29, Mullett was more explicit, telling the marble supplier:

> ... the Secretary of the Treasury has consented to the use of the north wing for the Inauguration Ball and reception, the new cash room to be used as the ball room. It is therefore you will see absolutely essential that the work should be forwarded without any further delay.

A more personal admonition concluded the letter:

> Please give this your personal attention as a failure to do the work in time will seriously injure you as well as myself.

A day or so later Mullett no longer needed to tell suppliers that the Treasury Extension would be the scene of the ball. Morning newspapers of the 30th said arrangements had been made for an unidentified but ample ballroom. The news spurred Senator Conkling to inquiry. Before the resolution went down later the same day to its second defeat, he rewarded his confreres with a capsuled picture of the Cash Room:

> ... an arrangement has been made to obtain the occupation of a large and newly-finished room in the Treasury building ... ... That is a matter with which we have nothing to do ... so that it turns out that those who wish a parade ... are in a fair way to have it. They have secured a room ... abundant in its height and depth and dimensions and grandeur for anybody who proposes to receive or be received on that occasion.

As Mullett pressed on toward the acknowledged deadline, most deliveries were on time. Occasionally, shipments hardly allowed time for installation. The supplier of the bronze chandeliers for the Cash Room, M. L. Curtis & Co. of New York, got the last two of the three there on March 1. Parry was the chief defaulter. A stream of letters and telegrams from Mullett in the first seventeen days of February failed to bring enough stone to finish the Cash Room walls and the north portico tiling. In desperation Mullett ordered three slabs of scarce bardiglio marble from a competing dealer, A. D. Shepard of New York. The two larger slabs were twins measuring 8 feet 5 inches by 2 feet 9 inches. Shepard's van delivered all three to the Adams Express Co.'s office in Jersey City, perhaps to the surprise of the expressmen, for direct transit to Washington aboard the company's own railroad car. Surely these slabs, which still decorate the Cash Room

walls, are the only construction marble ever to travel by express; they did so at Mullett's explicit instructions.

One item, which Mullett must have awaited with anxiety now that Parry's marble had to be foregone, reached him on February 27. It was a box of "red, white, and blue bunting." Captain John McGowan of the United States Revenue Marine, the seagoing arm Treasury then possessed, had sent the colors. A temporary wood floor, meantime, had been laid in the Cash Room. By the night of the ball it had been "well waxed." Decorating began on March 2. Soon McGowan's colors clothed the nude brick of the Cash Room's upper walls. Evergreens eked out the concealment the flags were intended to assure. An allegorical painting of peace, once displayed in the Capitol rotunda, was mounted at an undefined location in the Cash Room. Peace must have been the theme of the ball for gas jets arrayed on the north portico, the New York Times reporter also observed, spelled in flame "the talismanic word of the hour, 'Peace'." By the time the doors were ready to open at 8 o'clock on March 4 flowers contributed the charm of color and scent to north wing decorations, but the Times writer saw in the Cash Room bronze and marble "sufficient to challenge admiration."

Ball-goers entered the building from Fifteenth Street, mounting lateral stairs to the center of the Treasury colonnade. Here they entered what is now the second floor. The outside stairways were removed in the colonnade's reconstruction, beginning in 1907, and the present entrance was opened into what had been the basement and is now the first floor. From the old entrance story, guests, accustomed to climbing stairs in pre-elevator days, walked up cantilevered east wing stairs which Robert Mills had designed, along with the colonnade, in 1836. Women found their cloakrooms on the present day fourth and fifth floors; all the men's were on the fifth. Seemingly ever solicitous for the comfort of the guests, the Ball Committee had tried to satisfy every foreseeable need. Coiffeurs and seamstresses, tailors and bootblacks were on hand in the east wing. Guests, coming in from the storm of mingled snow and rain, undoubtedly needed grooming before going to the new northeast staircase, also cantilevered, to descend to the Cash Room, the original center of the affair.

When they reached the Cash Room, the evening's first failure was apparent but hardly alarming to any but Mullett and Treasury co-officers. Evidently they professed mystification for the eyes and questions of the New York Times reporter led him to say:

> ... the gas in the principal reception-room for some unknown and irremediable cause failed to burn with a brilliancy sufficient to give the magnificent room anything but a hazy, twilight appearance, and as a consequence, the proposed formal reception of the President was changed.

Apparently, the Evening Star reporter reached the north wing after the official couples had gone to a third floor room, over the north entrance, brightly lighted by gaslight chandeliers of the Treasury pattern, then being introduced. Consequently, the Star account did not mention the half-light and the shift it had caused. The reporter's taste for figures, however, revealed the explanation, then unstated, of the "irremediable cause" of the semidarkness. His report pointed out that the room was lighted "by three chandeliers with ninety burners, as follows--a centre chandelier, forty-two burners, and two chandeliers on the ends of twenty-four burners. The bronze chandeliers were too small. Within a few weeks fixtures with 36 jets replaced those with 24, giving a total of 114 burners. Apparently, these still left the room's light too dim for the business transacted there. All three were removed. In their place a trio of chandeliers of the Treasury pattern, each with 48 burners for 144 in all, were hung in the Cash Room.

Evacuation of the Cash Room by the official party freed it for dancing. Thereafter guests danced there as well as in "three large dancing rooms on as many stories." There were bands in each room reserved for dancing and "in well-selected places in the corridors." Telegraph wires linked the musicians, and they all played the same music at the same time, assuring harmony throughout the north wing.

Apparently, the Committee sold upwards of 2,000 tickets. Mary Clemmer Ames, a discerning feminist author, estimated that "six or more thousand" were present before the ball was over. That it was densely packed was evident in the New York Times account: by 9 o'clock, "crowded," by 10, "a jam." Commentators, then and later, agreed on the affair's tumult and confusion, but only in Mrs. Ames' reminiscences did the estimate of attendance appear. In a post mortem the next Sunday, the New York Times correspondent presented a somewhat concurring view, ascribing the difficulties to the presence of "twice as many ... as the halls would hold."

Subsequent disasters were due to delinquent management, although the huge numbers aggravated the intensity of the hardships which befell the guests. The first of these was at the supper room in the floor below the Cash Room. Once the room was filled, those inside were imprisoned by the hungry throng pressing to enter from the corridor. The New York Times reported that the first supper party was detained "for one full hour." The reporter estimated that, due to the failure to assure unhampered exits and entrances, "seven eighths of the crowd went home hungry without obtaining even a sight at a table." Many women, separated from escorts by unruly crowds, sat "on the floor cold, hungry, and disconsolate through that never-to-be-forgotten night."

Chaos struck departing guests at the cloakrooms as early as 11 o'clock. The New York Times reporter fixed the hour. He was on his way to Washington's famous Newspaper Row, a block away, to write an account of the ball. "If your correspondent had waited for his hat and overcoat before penning these lines," the dispatch said, "your readers would have been spared the infliction." What may have been a semijocular message to the editors stayed in. As late as 10 o'clock the next morning as many as a thousand people were still scrambling for hats and outer garments. The disastrous, even tragic, occurrence which sent people into the storm without outer clothing has been continuously, even routinely, deplored, but there have been few attempts to assess how the unfortunate events came about aside from casting on the Ball Committee the blame it properly deserved. Ben Perley Poore, a hybrid journalist and bureaucrat common in the era, suggested implausibly that practical jokers or thieves had purloined clothing early in the evening. This observation illustrated his account of the incident involving the editor of the New York Tribune, Horace Greeley, whose profanity at discovering the loss of his white hat and outercoat has become a hackneyed Washington tradition. Mrs. Ames offered a rational account of the affair that possessed the insight of an eyewitness and the spirit of a victim. The managers impressed Treasury messengers as cloakroom attendants unaware that "not half could read numbers." Receipt checks turned out to be meaningless to them, and the other messengers were engulfed. She recounted:

> Picture it! Six or more thousand people clamoring for their clothes! In the end they were all tumbled out "promiscuous" on the floor. Then came the siege. Few seized their own, but many snatched other people's ... anything, something to protect them from the pitiless morning whose wind came down like the bite of death.

The search for lost articles, so she said, went on long afterward. Diamonds and pearls were among the things reported missing. This was an implication she did not mention that pickpockets and other thieves had successfully run the gauntlet of sharp-eyed Washington and New York police lined up at the entrance to keep them out.

Having left hat and coat hostage to the Committee, the Times reporter returned to retrieve them. What he saw sent him rushing back through the storm to his office to hurry off a postscript. It arrived in time to be printed with his long account of the ball. Unfortunately a crease in the Library of Congress copy has rendered illegible in the microfilm the hour and minute of the postscript's dispatch. It illuminated the disastrous end of the ball:

> The scene at the ball now baffles all description. The crowd has ... degenerated into a perfect crash. The

> confusion in the cloak rooms is beyond conception. Hundreds of gentlemen are leaving the building without coats and hats, and ladies, faint with exhaustion, are in vain waiting or making fruitless search for their outside wrappings. In Fifteenth Street there is bedlam among the hackmen, and if the guests are successful enough to find their clothing, it is only to find they have lost the means of getting home. Everything today has been a great success. But the inauguration ball tonight is too much of a success to be really a good thing.

Perhaps the Department was the sole benefactor of the ill-starred affair. The north wing and the new banking room, as the Cash Room was often called at the time, was the focus of intense scrutiny of thousands of eyes. The Times reporter, writing on more mature reflections of a day or two, pointed out on the ensuing Sunday:

> ... aside from the reception of the President the ball was simply a sort of bank reception. It seemed as if a large new building had been completed, and the invited guests had come to examine it. Most of those in the building made it their business to examine the building rather than trip the light fantastic toe.

At no apparent cost to Treasury, he might have added. That the Supervising Architect's office had incurred obligations for the affair became evident when it got a dun for the Cash Room's temporary flooring. The supplier's reminder of March 16 pleaded for payment as soon as possible without saying how much was owed or for what. An endorsement was more revelatory, saying the letter "Trans[mitted] bills for flooring furnished for the Inauguration Ball." Whether Treasury or the Committee paid this bill is uncertain, but the Committee reimbursed the Supervising Architect's office for its expenses within a few weeks. The Secretary of the Committee, Thomas L. Tullock of Washington, D.C., delivered by hand on March 27 a check for $1,500, and Mullett passed it on to the Disbursing Clerk for deposit to the account of the Treasury Extension. That the Committee had owed even more appeared in 1871 when the House of Representatives published a report of an investigation of Treasury contracts. Reimbursement had taken the odd form of the check for cash and $811.04 in the return of materials for $2,311.04 in all. In the report's oblique language the money had been used for "sundry materials and labor for decorating, hauling, washing floors, etc."

## III. COMMEMORATIVE TABLETS

One of the Cash Room's conversation pieces was the commemorative marble tablets over two of the three doors through which the tide of visitors had flowed into the room. Apparently the center doorway had not yet been accented by the electric clock soon to undergo repairs. Arrows of critical commentary were aimed at the bardiglio panels incised with the names of six Treasury officers connected with the Cash Room--the only adverse comments of the evening aimed at the Cash Room and its appointments.

Hugh McCulloch's name led the list on the first stone. His first tour of duty as Secretary of the Treasury began under President Lincoln in March 1865 and ended with Grant's inauguration. One of only two men ever twice to hold the office, McCulloch returned 15 years later for a few months under President Arthur. Associated with McCulloch on the same panel in the due order then of the Treasury hierarchy were Assistant Secretaries William E. Chandler and James P. Hartley. Chandler had resigned more than a year earlier, on November 30, 1867, and the name of his successor, Edmund Cooper, was missing. Consequently, speculation over the presence of Chandler's name would have been understandable among a crowd unaware of Chandler's consuming interest in the north wing and the Cash Room during the three years he had been an Assistant Secretary. Mullett, in effect, was paying a debt.

W. H. Hunt, Chief Clerk, F. E. Spinner, Treasurer of the United States, and A. B. Mullett, Supervising Architect, were the names and titles in that order on the other tablet. The Chief Clerk ranked immediately below the Secretary and Assistant Secretaries and acted for them in their absence. The Treasurer's jurisdiction, embraced the Cash Room, and he had been consulted on its design, construction, and decoration. Apparently Mullett was honoring in the commemoration, as he later insisted, the men with whom he had dealt in the course of creating the Cash Room--"the most beautiful banking-house probably in the world. "

In spite of the Cash Room's twilight and the marble's dark gray veining, the lettering was unmistakably readable. A coating of gilt, now long gone from the carving, brought the names sharply to the eyes of the horde in the room. Unfortunately, the listing conveyed no sense of what the panels were intended to commemorate in the light of Mullett's only explanation nearly six years later. Instead, viewers misinterpreted the meaning. An exemplification of what the crowd read into the names appeared the next Sunday in the New York Times. Speaking of "the great blemishes of the marble banking or currency room," the reporter wrote:

> The blemishes consist of a tablet over each of the main entrances, on which is inscribed in gilt letters, the name of the Secretary of the Treasury, Hugh McCulloch,

> the Treasurer of the United States, that of the Architect, and others. The impropriety of putting those names on a building not built during a single Administration--begun before some of them were ever heard of, and not yet finished--is manifest.

Apparently, the people in the room associated the commemoration with the Treasury Building, possibly its north wing, but certainly not just the Cash Room.

In contrast with citing the "impropriety" of the plaques, the same reporter had applauded Mullett's taste a few days earlier. Praise verging on the extravagant was inherent in a statement that "the good taste [Mullett] displayed in all cases wherein good taste was required" matched "the celerity with which this part of the Treasury building had been erected." Perhaps the reporter did not cast on Mullett the blame for "the blemishes."

Mullett's sudden resignation from the Office of Supervising Architect late in 1874 must have renewed gossip about the tablets. That they had been a recurring point at issue was evident in a letter that Chandler, one of the commemorated Treasury officers, wrote Mullett on December 10, three weeks before the Architect would leave the post he had held for nearly nine years. Apparently, Chandler had called on Mullett at his office and, finding him out, tried to persuade him to remove the tablets in a letter in Chandler's own hand on the Supervising Architect's stationery. The moving text, in its entirety, was rich in respect and friendship for Mullett:

> The tablets in the cash-room of the Treasury Department containing among others my name as Assistant Secretary were placed there by you on the completion of the room and without the knowledge or procurement of any of the officers of the Department whose names there appear. Your disposition to honor them was creditable to your heart and is appreciated by me.
>
> But the act itself must be judged upon other principles. It is not good taste to make so conspicuous a display of the names; and the tablets mar the beauty of a room otherwise faultless in its construction and adornment, and of itself without inscription a sufficient credit to the Department officers who authorized it. The Architect having a due regard to his own fame should have his name inscribed somewhere in the room but in a less noticeable place.
>
> These opinions I have repeatedly expressed orally and have requested the tablets removed. I now repeat the request in writing and ask that while you are architect of the building the removal may take place; which I am

> sure every one will approve but which friends will hesitate to order; and which ought not to be left to be done by unfriendly hands.

Mullett replied the next day with a brief, firm refusal. Agreeing that he had not asked "your permission or that of the other officers ... to inscribe your names," the Architect explained that the commemorations "were a record of the officers of the Treasury under whose direction the room was constructed ...." He struck a defensive attitude, asserting that there was "sufficient precedent for placing the tablets there" without citing the precedents. His abrupt conclusion was that "I can see no good reason for mutilating the room." Obviously nettled by Chandler's request, Mullett could add lamely only the odd token of regret "that so valued a friend should feel annoyed by my action."

In immediate rebuttal on the following day, Chandler reproached Mullett for "not even discuss[ing] the question of good taste"--what the Timesman saw as a question of propriety. But Chandler had no desire to pursue the debate. He had written to present a less demanding request: "Please oblige me by sending me a copy of my letter of the 10th." Presumably Chandler was keeping a full and exact record of a career which continued its upward trajectory over the next 25 years. He became Secretary of the Navy in Arthur's Cabinet and represented New Hampshire in the Senate from 1887 to 1901. Mullett replied on December 17, "cheerfully ... sending a copy of your letter ...." He sharpened the reply with a tart rejoinder of regret "that my logic is no more satisfactory than my action." There is no evidence that the two men in their later years renewed the friendship of their Treasury days. Even though the gilt of the Inaugural night has gone, the tablets remain in the Cash Room.

## IV. DESIGN

Alfred Bult Mullett was the Architect of the Cash Room. He designed and built it in the course of constructing the north wing largely to plans of other architects. In asserting credit for the architecture of the Cash Room he renounced in fact whatever claim he might have had to the wing's design.

Construction of the wing was Mullett's first challenging task as Supervising Architect. He had entered the Treasury's construction office in 1863. Thereafter, he enjoyed rapid promotions, rising to Assistant Supervising Architect in 1864 and acceding to the office of Supervising Architect in June 1866. He replaced his mentor, Isaiah Rogers, who had resigned the previous October. The Government's new chief architect was 32. He was certainly the youngest man ever to hold the office during its century of existence.

Mullett's first annual report, dated September 30, 1866, said little about the wing and nothing about the Cash Room. In a style that seemed peculiarly Mullett's own, he offered inverted assurance of finishing the wing in 1868. He pointed out that an expected delay in demolishing Old State Building, which stood on the site, "will probably defer the entire completion ... until 1868." Apparently, Mullett was saying he would finish the Treasury Extension in 1867 or 1868. As it turned out, he completed the north wing in 1869 with still other work remaining on the Extension.

In the report for 1867, when the wing's construction was well advanced, Mullett revealed an important structural aspect of the Cash Room:

> In the arrangement of the interior [of the wing] I have restored the original design abandoned by the late supervising architect .... The only deviation [presumably from the original design] made by me has been to meet the want of a suitable business room for the Treasurer's Cashier and his Assistants .... To provide this accommodation it was found necessary to project the centre of the court-yard front twelve feet, which ... provides a fine room ... for the transaction of business, ... creditable to the government and an ornament to the building.

Nothing could be plainer than the implication that Treasury possessed an abundance of architectural plans for the north wing. Mullett's statement that he returned to the "original design" meant that he had adopted plans which Ammi Burnham Young, who preceded Rogers in office, had prepared. Verification of the existence of Young's plans exists in the annual report for 1859 which noted that "a large portion of the north wing [granite] is delivered ...." As the granite supplier cut each stone to its required size, north wing drawings were then on hand while Young was still Supervising Architect.

Far more significant was Mullett's revelation of his plan to move the wing's courtyard wall 12 feet outward. Thus, he was making the Cashier's room 12 feet wider, 32 feet in all. In the south and west wings, where Thomas Ustick Walter's plan of 1855 had fixed the proportions, rooms overlooking the courtyards had a standard width of 20 feet. Most of the rooms facing the exterior also had the same width. Portico rooms with a far longer reach outward were the chief exceptions. Mullett's "deviation" was a radical departure from the standard dimensions to which Treasury builders had held fast since 1855. Mullett's projection, primarily intended to benefit the Cashier's business room, ran from the basement to the attic and enlarged every floor in the wing.

As the Cash Room eventually turned out, it was 72 feet long, a sizeable unmentioned detail in Mullett's annual reports. There was also silence on the plan to give the room the lavish height of two stories. Fear that these dimensions would stir outcries of extravagance must have dictated the reticence.

Whispered, if not outspoken, criticism must have been heard by the time Mullett wrote the next report, for 1868. He devoted a long passage to the frugality which marked the design of the Cash Room. Comparative cost studies, he asserted, preceded preparation of "the present design" which otherwise went undefined. "Scagliola, frescoing, painting, and other modes of interior decoration" were listed as those whose costs were measured against each other.

As the next step in Mullett's account, the Department referred the design to two of its ranking officers, Assistant Secretary William E. Chandler and Treasurer of the United States Francis E. Spinner. The report recorded their approval without saying that Chandler was a former Treasury officer and had resigned nearly a year earlier. The resignation was effective November 30, 1867. That they approved is attested by a drawing, "Details of Interior Finish of Banking Room," on which they had inscribed their approving signatures. By an odd oversight contrary to customary practice, the inscription was undated.

The names of Chandler and Spinner launched Mullett into a somewhat overpowering defense of the Cash Room design. In his enthusiasm he spoke at one time of the work as having been "executed" even though eight months would elapse before the Cash Room was finished. In the course of his apologia, he declared:

> It was considered that this room should in the purity of its design, and by the avoidance of all shams and imitations of material, be emblematic of the dignity of the nation and the stability of its credit. The high character of these gentlemen will, it is believed, satisfy the most rigid economist that the design is not more costly than was demanded by the use for which it was intended. The work has been executed at so low a rate that it would be impossible to duplicate it unless at a greatly advanced cost ....

Designers and draftsmen helped Mullett on the north wing and the Cash Room, but only two are clearly identifiable today -- J. Goldsborough Bruff and James G. Hill. Of the others, names on payrolls or monograms on drawings, there is no knowledge of their lives before or after they bent over drafting boards under the watchful eye of John C. Rankin, then the Superintendent of Draftsmen. That the latter was intently observant is certain from Mullett's letter in February 1868 instructing the Superintendent to report any "absence of draughtsmen ... from their post

of duty during regular office hours ...." The letter told Rankin to remind them that "regulations ... require each employee to be at his desk" from 9 to 4 except Saturday when the office closed at 3 o'clock.

That Hill appeared on a Treasury Extension drafting payroll for November 1867 suggests that he worked that month on the Cash Room. Then one of the ranking draftsmen, Hill became one of Mullett's successors as Supervising Architect, serving from 1876 to 1883. One task which fell to his lot was that of advancing toward completion Mullett's French Empire masterworks in Boston, Cincinnati, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. All but the last have been demolished. One of Hill's far-sighted recommendations was a proposal in 1882 for constructing an archival building for records without current usefulness. It was one of the earliest, perhaps the first, of a growing volume of recommendations ultimately realized in the construction of the National Archives Building in the 1930's, half a century after Hill's resignation. But nothing in the Cash Room can be recognized as the fruit of Hill's stint in November 1867.

Bruff's work in the Cash Room is more certain. By his own repeated declarations, he designed the bronze railing of the Cash Room balcony. He was so proud of the design that he listed it as one of his chief works whenever the opportunity appeared. Bruff's assertions suggest, moreover, that, in the 1870's and 1880's when he made the claims, the railing was a publicly acknowledged-superior work of the architectural arts. He was also the delineator, if not the author, of the design of the original Cash Room counter a far more routine work than the railing.

Intervals of high adventure interrupted a lifetime of toil at drafting boards for the Navy, War, and the Treasury Departments. As a schoolboy of 16, Bruff's evident drawing talent inspired the War Department to retain him to draw "a Map of the Country lying between the Mississippi River and the Western Ocean." Bruff's fee of $25 was paid "at the direction of the Secretary of War" upon certification that the boy had drawn the map. A few weeks later he was off to the United States Military Academy, resigning at the end of two years to go to sea. He soon signed on privateersmen preying on Spanish shipping in behalf of South American nations fighting for independence.

He came ashore at Norfolk in 1826, taking a draftsman's job at the Navy Yard. Over the next two decades he moved to Fortress Monroe to work for the Corps of Engineers and then to Washington, D.C., to join the Topographical Engineers. The same thirst for adventure which had sent him to sea in 1822 spurred him in 1849, then a family man in his forties, to organize an all-male wagon train which he commanded on a swift transit to California. Without troubling to search for gold, Bruff crammed his journals

and filled his sketchbooks before coming home. Publication of the journals was delayed until 1944 when the first edition of "Gold Rush" appeared. It soon won the reputation of being the most comprehensive account of the forty-niners.

Back in Washington, Treasury's new construction office opened a new vista to the draftsman. A growing taste for the decorative arts won him frequent assignments to design interior decorations in the south wing, the first of the Treasury Extension's three wings. Often he signed his work as "designing artist." Indians and buffaloes, tepees and peace pipes, golden eagles and rattlesnakes decorated the gaslight chandeliers and wall brackets he designed, recalling his journey across the west he had mapped as a boy. The fountain which once flowed on Treasury's north platform was his work. He did the Treasury gates. All these have vanished.

Evidence of Bruff's talent survives, however, throughout the south, west, and north wings which were built as the Treasury Extension between 1855 and 1869. The capitals of the pilasters which line the Extension's corridors are an example. The outstanding pieces of Bruff's work are the bronze railing of the Cash Room balcony and the bronze filigree which flowers on the balusters of the south wing staircases. Oddly enough they date from the beginning and the end of the Extension's construction, suggesting that over the years Bruff maintained a capacity for eye-catching designs.

There is evidence that Mullett hardly agreed. Even before the Cash Room work had ended, he discharged the "designing artist," perhaps simply for old age. Bruff was then approaching 65. The dismissal appeared in the form of a callous afterthought in a letter in which Mullett recommended to Secretary of the Treasury George S. Boutwell three "promotions and appointments" and listed them. The concluding sentence recommended "the removal of J. G. Bruff, Clerk of the third class," effective July 1, 1869.

A timely transfer took Bruff to the Office of the Register of the Treasury where he performed drafting service until 1876. Then he returned to the Supervising Architect's staff, remaining there until his death in 1889. He was then 84 or 85, depending on which of Bruff's recollections was the more accurate. By his own assertion he was the oldest Government worker in Washington. Whether any other civil servant ever achieved, before or since, so venerable age is questionable.

## V. CONSTRUCTION

In the hindsight of a century Supervising Architect A. B. Mullett's annual report for 1869, dated September 30, is notable

for omitting any mention of the Cash Room and its completion. Assuredly the reticence stemmed from painful recollections of Grant's reception-cum-ball which many people acutely shared. That the Treasurer of the United States and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue had moved into the north wing, as he noted in the report, permitted an offhand observation that the Treasury Extension had been "terminated."

Obviously, Mullett was less than inclined to dilate about the wing or the room. Perhaps part of the reason lay in his 1868 report. Not only had it left the impression that the Cash Room had been "executed" before October 1, 1868, but it had also forecast that the wing would be occupied by January 1, 1869, and the Extension ended "should no unforeseen difficulty occur." Apparently an "unforeseen difficulty," never described, had emerged. The wing was not ready for occupancy until the end of June.

Technically, moreover, the Extension was still incomplete when the Architect wrote the 1869 report despite his calm assertion of an achieved termination. The northwest staircase, a virtual twin to the cantilevered staircase in the northeast corner, was finished in the next year, 1870.

Mullett's forecast of occupation by January 1, 1869, incited him to sound a somewhat premature paean at the expense of earlier Treasury builders. He hailed the completion as beyond dispute, dating the expected moving in 21 months after setting the first stone on April 1, 1867. From this span he drew a comparison adverse to the construction of the south wing, which, he said, "was commenced on the 7th of September, 1855, and completed for occupancy about the same time in 1861." On almost every count Mullett had tilted the comparison in his favor.

"Completed for occupancy," key words in Mullett's account, concealed the reality that the south wing had been finished a year earlier. Extension funds, however, had been depleted in bringing the wing's construction to an end, and there was no money for furnishings and furniture for Treasury Department offices in the wing. So it remained untenanted except for the Attorney General's office and the Light-House Board which could provide their own furniture. They moved in in the late summer of 1860. Thus, the Treasury Extension's first and largely empty wing became a ready-made barracks for Union regiments which converged on Washington in the fateful spring of 1861.

Mullett also could have taken into account the existence of the "northwest corner," which had been built as part of the west wing. The corner, which Mullett called "the northwest angle" in his 1869 report, was the west end of the north wing. Consequently, when this wing was built, its western section, one quarter of the wing's length, was already in existence.

If Mullett's achievement fell short of his ambition to make January 1, 1869, the closing date for the work on the wing, he soon found a new date. It was Grant's inauguration day. Its date, March 4, 1869, was suitably inscribed along with the starting date of April 1, 1867, on a third tablet over the entrance--a companion to the memorial tablets which enlivened former Assistant Secretary William E. Chandler's sense of good taste. What certainly was one of Washington's first electric clocks separated the dates. Apparently the clock had a short life and soon disappeared along with the dated tablet from local memory and from view. Late in 1885, however, the Cash Room acquired a new electric clock. The acquisition was so momentous an event that the Naval Observatory was officially notified. By then, of course, the building had electric power, and there was no need to rely on dry batteries.

Of course, Mullett's north wing was built far faster than the larger south and west wings. In an era when construction's pace was normally slow, when stone, for example, still moved by sail in preference to steam and rarely by railroad, the performance was an outstanding achievement. Undoubtedly Mullett, brash, young, and ambitious, overdrew the comparison to establish recognition of his drive as well as his competence as the Treasury's Supervising Architect. He was proving himself a builder.

Marble and Marble Men. Beginning in August 1867, Mullett awarded a series of marble contracts. They took in the Cash Room marble and tiling, the north wing corridor tiling and skirting, and the flooring for the north portico. Not all the contracts were fulfilled for one reason or another, and in the end Henry Parry, a New York marble dealer, became the pillar on which the Architect relied for an increasingly large proportion of the Cash Room stone. An extraordinary encomium in the annual report of 1868 illustrates the extent to which Mullett's hopes rested on the marble man. Oddly, the praise appeared eight months before all the Cash Room marble had been delivered and set in mid-year 1869. In the report Mullett expressed, prematurely perhaps,

> ... my obligations to Henry Parry, esq., of New York, who, though originally the contractor for but a comparatively small portion of the marble work, has supplied, at the original contract prices, and at considerable inconvenience to himself, the deficiencies caused by the failure of other contractors ....

That Mullett wanted to maintain harmony with Parry may have been one of the reasons for the public praise. In the months before the report was written in October 1868 Mullett had savagely harassed Parry for the slow progress his workmen were making in setting Cash Room marble. There is no evidence in surviving documents that the harrying aroused Parry's hostility. But the

frenetic pace at which the Architect was going had certainly strained relations with other dealers.

One of these was Thomas J. Gagliardi to whom the first Cash Room contract went. He was an Italian exporter whose contract of August 26, 1867, was for $18,000 in gold, which then commanded a premium of 30 to 40 percent in American dollars. Gold's superior-value could lift the cost as high as $25,200, depending on the dollar's value on day of payment. The exporter's New York agent, A. D. Shepard, also a marble supplier, neglected to say in his letters to Mullett where Gagliardi lived in Italy. But the agent on one occasion spoke of Gagliardi's "studio," possibly testimony that the carved work Gagliardi delivered with the character of excellent sculpture had truly come from a sculptor's studio.

The Gagliardi contract embraced all the marble facings for the room's lower story except the cornice under the balcony. The exporter agreed to deliver 48 pilasters with their bases, shafts, and capitals in the "best blue Italian marble." For the wall slabs he promised Siena bardiglio, the panels of which would be bordered in black and gold molding, which he also would supply. Gagliardi's bid emphasized the colors.

Fortunately for the Cash Room, a large part of Gagliardi's first cargo survived the voyage. This has given the lower level a complete set of the blue marble pilasters with their remarkable capitals of the Jupiter Stator pattern, a Corinthian variant of rare elegance. The precision and fineness of the work, evident at a glance, attest skillful, unerring carving of a delicate design. Their quality stands in superior contrast to the Ionic capitals of the upper pilasters, which Parry's men carved in New York to a pattern Mullett supplied. The volutes appear disproportionately large to the width of the capitals and the height of the pilasters. Imagination can easily see them as a roost of large-eyed owls looking down in silent wisdom on the Cash Room's century of history. For the 48 pilasters and their capitals, Gagliardi collected $10,080 which a premium of 44 1/2 percent for gold elevated to $14,565.60. Each Jupiter Stator capital, bid at $125, cost the Treasury $180. In comparison the cost of each upper level pilaster, including base and capital, was $95.22. The Gagliardi piece in its entirety of base, shaft, and capital cost $230 before the gold premium was added.

Marble slabs in the balance of the cargo, which suffered severe damage, were trimmed to smaller sizes or cut up for ashlar, but black and gold moldings were splintered in pieces too small for salvage. Mullett began to press for replacements and for delivery of the Siena ashlar cut in concave curves for the four corners of the lower level. There were stiff warnings that delays would force the Supervising Architect "to procure it" at Gagliardi's expense. Pleas and threats of this kind continued up to February 1, 1869. Finally Shepard pointed out to Mullett that

the combination, especially the menace of penalties, had probably persuaded Gagliardi from further shipments for fear of "incur-[ring] the expense of landing them here only to find their place supplied." There is no indication that Gagliardi ever delivered the corners.

When the Treasury opened a series of bids in November 1867 for the remaining marble, Fisher & Bird, a New York partnership, emerged as low bidder for four marble and tile contracts at an aggregate cost of $22,535. The largest single item was the upper Cash Room facades--pilasters (bases, shafts, and capitals), panels, ashlar, moldings, curved corners, and so on. These were practically the same items Gagliardi was supplying for the understory for $18,000, the amount of his offer in the new bidding, again with the gold proviso. Fisher & Bird's bid was $13,160. Of course the partners received the contract as well as three others--for corridor tiles, $6,225, for Cash Room floor tiles, $525, and for the marble cornice in the Cash Room, $3,150.26. Although the last item was almost invariably termed a cornice, it was in reality an entablature crowned by the cornice with its finely chiseled modillions. The handsome decoration, now partly hidden by fluorescent troffers, is veined Italian white marble for which Fisher & Bird collected $15 a linear foot.

Ensuing events became entangled in a snarl in which, by April 1, 1868, Mullett and Fisher & Bird were leveling recriminations at each other. Second thoughts had suggested to the partners the wisdom of extricating the firm from the upper story contract by protesting that the drawings and specifications were misleading. This drew from the strong-minded Mullett the retort that the Department would compel fulfillment. Then the Department, too, had recourse to rethinking for a different reason. Apparently there had been the embarrassing discovery that Cash Room obligations exceeded available funds. Probably this is when Mullett turned to the possibility of decorating with "scagliola, frescoing, painting, and other modes ...." In the meantime the Department released Fisher & Bird from the disputed contract. All this occurred before February 29 when Mullett, in friendly approach, asked the firm if it were "willing to do the marble work for the upper story ... at the same price that the contract was awarded to you, if I can get an appropriation for the purpose ...." Mullett explained:

> My reason for making the inquiry is the strong desire on the part of a large number of prominent gentlemen that the original design should be carried out. They are willing to use their influence to obtain an appropriation provided you are willing to do the work at your bid.

The partners were willing to renew, but at a higher price, drawing Mullett's stern warning that the Department would not pay

"a single dollar more." The firm's adamant attitude brought Mullett to New York for negotiations in which only one partner, Clinton G. Bird, took part. The Architect left with the belief that he had been persuasive. At a reiterated refusal to sign a new contract, however, Mullett vented his anger in charges of bad faith. Frigid hostility thereafter colored the necessary correspondence over the firm's surviving contracts.

The fracture with Fisher & Bird brought Henry Parry into the Cash Room as the principal source of its marble. He was not a newcomer to the Cash Room or, for that matter, to Treasury Extension contracting. In 1863 he had had the misfortune to ship 154 boxes of marble corridor tile for the west wing aboard a schooner which turned out to be a Confederate blockade runner. Ironically, the Treasury revenue gunboat, Reliance, captured the schooner unloading part of her cargo in Virginia and took the prize to Baltimore. Parry rushed off to rescue the tile, taking the precaution to recruit the help of Supervising Architect Isaiah Rogers. The marble supplier's introduction to the Cash Room came on September 25, 1867, when his bid of $7,800 won the contract for the marble counter. Aside from the counter contract, he had been unsuccessful on the north wing, entering losing bids for tiling, skirting, mantels, and Cash Room cornice. He had not competed in bidding for the marble wall facings.

In spite of Parry's appearance of no interest, Mullett turned to him almost at once to replace Fisher & Bird. The first inkling appeared in a letter to Treasury's Superintendent of Repairs in New York. It instructed Colonel J. F. Morse to pick up at once "the pilaster cap" from Fisher & Bird. The Architect was writing about a model of the Ionic pilaster capitals which he had sent the firm a month earlier. Mullett ended the terse order with the cryptic news that the Superintendent would be told later what to do with the model. The next day another letter told Morse to deliver the model to Parry "to whom the contract for the remainder of the marble work for the Cashier's room has been awarded." Mullett warned Morse against telling Fisher & Bird where the model was going.

How Mullett managed to award what appeared to be a new Cash Room contract without competitive bidding is unknown. If the 1868 annual report is precisely accurate, Parry's contract was "at the original contract prices," presumably in the Fisher and Bird bid. This supposition appears to be borne out by an itemized payment showing Parry collecting $95 for each complete upper story pilaster, the price quoted in Fisher & Bird's bid back in November 1867. At the time of the award to Parry, Mullett was exhibiting a casual attitude toward bidding and contracting. This became even more evident in an attempt to wrest from Fisher & Bird its small contract for furnishing tile for the Cash Room floor. The Treasury had been intending to tile only the lobby's

515 square feet, but Parry recommended tiling the entire floor, behind the counter as well as in the lobby. Not only was Mullett's acceptance immediate, but he told Parry in the same letter that, if he would match the Fisher & Bird price of 94 cents a square foot, he could have the order. Apparently someone in Mullett's office warned him that bidding was necessary and Parry took the new contract, limited to the larger area behind the counter, with a bid of $1.10. It was plain, of course, that Mullett wanted Parry for "the whole of the work in the Banking Room ... and to get ... credit ... as you helped the Department out of a very tight place." So it was inevitable that Mullett's gratitude inspired him to look to Parry to replace irreparably damaged Gagliardi marble and to make up whatever shipments failed to arrive from Italy.

As the fall of 1868 came into sight, Mullett and Parry could foresee massive difficulty in clothing Cash Room walls with selected marbles of premium quality from American and Italian quarries. Matching colors and obtaining desirable contrasts were obstacles to completion by the year's end. Undoubtedly the size and complexity of the task had been the largest reason forbidding Parry, an experienced marble man, from bidding on the work in the absence of an assured stock. The limited availability of the marbles they wanted had sent them searching for alternatives, even at higher prices. In one of the first letters in which Mullett faced up to the question, the Architect asked Parry to consider "Red Lisbon" for second story pilaster pedestals, pointing out that "it is not dear." In the same letter, he also suggested Tennessee marble with Siena Panels for the upper level pedestals, asking "what the extra expense would be." It turned out to be $15 a pedestal, and the proposal was adopted. In November, Parry told Mullett of a chance to obtain 10 slabs of red Vermont marble at $112 each, and the Architect told him to do so. In February 1869, although the Cash Room work was in its final drive, Mullett was still searching. A quarryman from Philadelphia showed him samples from a new quarry, which the Architect sent to Parry "for our banking room," declaring:

> ... I should much prefer to use it to Bardiglio, provided you can make satisfactory arrangements with him ....

Whether the mysterious marble, superior to Italian bardiglio in Mullett's eyes, was purchased and put in the Cash Room is unknown. Obviously, however, Mullett was ready to go up or down in cost and presumably in quality to obtain suitable marble. Presumably, Parry acted on Mullett's instructions, and there can be little doubt that the Architect took the stoneman's advice.

In their quiet desperation Mullett and Parry even repaired fractured slabs for panels. The Architect called on Parry in November 1868 to rush "the Bardilla pannels (sic) you are repair-

ing for us." (Bardilla was the way Treasury clerks, unaware of Italian's silent g, most often spelled bardiglio, and Gagliardi's name often came out simply Galiardi.) Again in May 1869 there was an enlightening exchange over broken slabs which verified the presence of at least two panels of Sarrancolin marble. These are slabs which Mary Clemmer Ames called Sarran Golum in her recollections of Ten Years in Washington, placing them in the second tier, where, she implied, the panels of this uncommon Pyrenean variety were embedded. To her eyes the stone, "at a distance, of blood-red hue," displayed on close viewing "undreamed of beauties in veining and tint." Certainly Parry would have agreed. When Mullett excitedly informed him that two of the last panels to reach Washington were "so very badly broken as to be totally beyond repair," Parry was calm in his assurance that they could be mended and promised to send a man "to repair the two Sarrancolin slabs ...." He doubted that the marble could be damaged beyond use, adding with a thoughtful touch that "it is a very costly marble."

Not just two of the second tier panels are the rare red marble from Hautes Pyrenees near the southwestern corner of France. All ten are Sarrancolin marble. The proposal to panel the upper level with slabs of red Vermont marble to which Mullett had consented early in November had been abandoned by May. The Architect neglected, however, to put his assent to the alteration in a letter to Parry, the source of the suggestion to employ the Vermont stone. The probability is that the dealer had the good fortune to encounter an opportunity to buy a consignment of Sarrancolin marble suitable in dimensions and asked for the Architect's concurrence at one of their occasional meetings in New York or Washington. Mullett readily agreed even though the stone cost more than twice the price of $112 a panel he had been willing to pay for the red slabs from Vermont. The panels which later enraptured the eyes of Mrs. Ames apparently were being cemented in place in the upper walls when two of the slabs were fractured, necessitating the hasty summons to Parry at the end of May. But the marble had reached the Cash Room undamaged. A pair of ranking Treasury builders, W. G. Steinmetz, the Extension's Assistant Superintendent of Construction, and Mullett himself, acknowledged the delivery "in good order" of "10 Panels Sarrancolin Marble 301 4/12 [square feet]" before May 21, the day Parry was paid for the stone. The certification, which did double duty as a receipt, carried Henry Parry's ornate signature acknowledging in turn Treasury's payment for the panels. He received $2,563.46 for the Sarrancolin marble--$256 a panel. As a certainty beyond doubt, the quality and the cost of the marble sheathing of the Cash Room had been scaled skyward.

Nearly a year before the Cash Room decorations were all in place, Fisher & Bird delivered the entablature with its modillion-lined cornice. Before the end of August 1868, the firm was credited with a payment of $3,150 for the work. As the disbursement had

been duly certified, the marble work apparently had passed inspection. But obviously Mullett had not cast a critical, perhaps prejudiced, eye over the work. He discovered, so he said in a letter in late October, that the modillions had "not even [been] fitted to the remainder of the work." A local marble cutter, Mullett added, would do the work at the firm's expense. The repairs, largely cutting joggles to notch the work together, cost $124, and the sum was deducted from money the Supervising Architect was withholding as a standard practice.

With equal alacrity Fisher & Bird were well ahead of time in delivering the black, white, and red tile for the floor of the Cash Room lobby. "Tiling complete for U.S. Treasurer's Cash Room" was laid down at a Georgetown wharf by August 15, 1868, and the firm collected the contract price of $525 on December 23. The delay in payment was partly due to the repairs to the modillions. The firm's shipment, a count disclosed, was short by 17 feet 6 inches in the required black marble border. It was, in any event, forwarded in time for laying the tile after the ball. Tiling the Cash Room floor in May and June 1869 was a repetition of earlier struggles to extract stone from Parry. Most of Fisher & Bird's stock had been on hand since the previous August. But delays in Parry's shipments plagued the work in spite of the supplier's assurance as early as April 30 that "a portion of floor tile will be sent tomorrow [and] balance of tile to complete, during the coming week." In mid-May Parry phrased the promise in a new form with, perhaps unwittingly, an elastic escape clause when he wrote Mullett that:

> there will be no doubt of shipping ... all the black border recently ordered, possibly the whole of the floor tile & red dots by tomorrow's steamer, if not all the red dots. The balance left on Wednesday's Steamer. This finishes the work.

That tile was still lacking a month later was evident in a Treasury telegram demanding:

> Have you shipped remainder Lisbon border for Cash Room. Answer.

"Black border," "red dots," and "Lisbon border" were terms which grew out of differences in the two designs for the Cash Room floor. In both, there were white octagon marble tiles dotted with red squares about six inches square. In the lobby floor a black border ran around the intricate red and white pattern, matching the base courses of the walls and counter. Behind the counter, however, there was a different design. Here the border, also 20 inches wide, was red stone, the same kind of stone as the red centers, squares, or "dots," as Parry called them, even though they were not circular. The red stone was a marble from the neighborhood of Lisbon and Littleton, New Hampshire, and took

its name, Red Lisbon, from the former place. Whether it is present on the walls, for which Mullett once suggested its use, is not apparent in the documentary record.

Bronze for the Balcony: A Dollar a Pound. The Cash Room's bronze balcony, mounted on 64 iron bars extending 3 feet 3 inches from the brick wall in which they were embedded behind the marble facade, cost at least $7,500. This was the sum of Treasury's payments to the two manufacturers Mullett had to employ to get the railing and its ornamentation.

The first and principal dealer was M. L. Curtis & Co. of New York, who also made the room's first gaslight chandeliers. Their bid for the railing was $25 a foot, and they delivered it in September 1868, collecting first $4,889.35 for the bronzework and later $500 for the patterns for the castings. A sharp argument over shrinkage in the bronze preceded payment. The firm finally convinced an irate Mullett that it was not at fault, and the Architect accepted the work "upon agreement of Mr. Curtis to furnish additional ornaments that will remedy the difficulty." But there is no evidence that the firm did so.

Instead, Mullett obtained the additional bronze from Henri H. Lovie. Before the Civil War, Lovie, a portraitist and landscape painter, had lived in Cincinnati, where Mullett had learned the rudiments of his profession in the office of Isaiah Rogers. Certainly they had been acquaintances, perhaps even fast friends. During the war, Lovie had been one of Leslie's battlefield artists, serving with Sherman's Army of the West. He had settled in Philadelphia where he had combined obvious talents in the fine arts with a commercial enterprise as a designer and manufacturer of bronzework. He had obtained north wing contracts for the bronze balusters for the cantilevered staircases and the bronze candelabra for outdoor lamps. An even more obvious boon was the opportunity to make architectural drawings in perspective under Mullett's relentless tutelage on architectural principles. Lovie reciprocated with advice on design which Mullett solicited. The railing design, in fact, had drawn Lovie's opinion that "nothing but a little more freedom in curve is desirable" and given the artist a familiarity with the balcony long before he would ornament it.

Mullett's arrangement with Lovie paid him $1 a pound for the delivery of the ornamentation. The rate apparently was reckoned on the estimated weight of a section of the railing for which the Curtis firm had bid $25 a foot--a method of calculation the firm had disdained. Thereafter, Lovie was swift in the delivery of 2,141 pounds of bronze castings, collecting the same number of dollars. The major contribution was "the bronze soffit frame or cornice," as Mullett described it. Fluorescent lighting fixtures which now extend around the room under the balcony--in effect, a soffit of light largely hides Lovie's work. "Shield ornaments,"

to a total of 103 1/2 pounds, were apparently the pieces intended to compensate for the shrinkage which occurred when the bronze railing was cast in sections.

Counter and Screen. The sole Cash Room contract which Parry fulfilled with time to spare was for the marble counter which stood unaltered from 1869 to 1928. The angular and shallow U-shaped counter, with corridor walls and doorways, enclosed the public lobby--about a third or so of the Cash Room area. Parry obtained the contract in competitive bidding in which three other marble dealers presented proposals. Parry's bid of $7,800 was the lowest of six bids opened on October 15, 1867. Long before the end of July 1868, Parry placed the counter in Mullett's hands, receiving a payment for each of three shipments. The last was $600 for the counter slab. Mullett held off setting up the counter until early in April 1869 when its installation preceded the laying of the Cash Room tiling.

The counter supported the screen. It was a superstructure of wood and glass pierced by grilled windows at which tellers executed business in behalf of the Treasurer's Cashier. The firm Mullett enlisted to make the screen was Pottier & Stymus of New York, asking it in November 1868 for an estimate of the cost, "the wood to be the best San Domingo mahogany" decorated with "black wood and gilt." The firm specialized in making furniture to order and apparently possessed a reputation for superiority. Its clientele would soon include the Grant White House with Mullett in the intermediary role.

Finding Pottier & Stymus's first estimate of $1,450 too costly and its design too ornate, Mullett succeeded by late January in obtaining an acceptable price of $1,075. The furniture firm found it harder to give up on its taste for overembellishment. But Mullett disarmed the partners by insisting that the Treasury preference was "not a question of taste, but of adaptation to the wants of the office."

In mid-May the screen, packed in five cases without the glass, was put aboard a steamer in New York. Pottier & Stymus instructed Treasury to purchase nine sheets of white, translucent plate glass, prescribing the dimensions. As soon as the firm's workmen were needed to put up the screen, Treasury was told to telegraph. "Our men," the letter assured, "will leave here on your notice of the same [day]." The summons came early in June, and the crew of workmen, headed by William P. Stymus, had the screen in position before June 15. For the mahogany and ebony partition, as the Pottier & Stymus bill defined the screen, the cost of $1,075 had grown to $1,310. The added charges defrayed the crating and the wages and expenses of the workmen. The Cash Room stood fully equipped for its work.

The Last Letter. No official date for the completion of the Cash Room is discernible in the records. Even while Pottier & Stymus workmen were setting up their wood work, fastening it to the counter, and putting in place the sheets of glass, marble setters were still at work in the room.

Probably seven in all at the time, they were the Treasury Extension's own gang of marble setters. There is little doubt that, more than a year earlier, Mullett had Extension stonemen setting the marble as it came to hand. This was the ordinary practice in the post-Civil War years. Contractors ordinarily were suppliers, and the Government usually hired the workmen, paying daily wages. In the 1850's, Treasury had experimented with construction contracting, but revived the older system of day labor after the war. Occasionally, a supplier like Pottier & Stymus might furnish workmen to install what the firm supplied. Occasionally, too, Treasury might contract for service independently of a supplier. Neither practice was commonly used.

In getting the marble on the Cash Room walls, Mullett went through the cycle. Beginning with an extension crew, he turned to contracting in May 1868. A reasonable supposition is that he could employ the Extension gang at stonework, thereby getting a larger work force to help him reach his target completion date of December 31. He solicited Parry's help, even taking the questionable step of sending him a copy of a proposal from another contractor. Mullett pleaded:

> You will see that it is much more advantageous than yours .... I cannot of course pay you any more than anyone else, but if you like to put up all the work in the Banking room at the same rates .... I should like you to come at once ....

Little did Mullett know that he had made the wrong choice. Throughout June and July, Mullett bombarded his contractor with expostulatory letters. On one occasion the Architect verged on humor in his remonstrance:

> ... I cannot go on with the setting of the marble work under the present arrangements. The work already done has cost over seventy-five cents per superficial foot and progresses with such rapidity that the prospects are that I should die of old age long before your workmen complete the setting.

Two months later Mullett replaced Parry by contracting with William and Alexander Rutherford, Washington marble dealers, to finish the Cash Room setting. This arrangement ended early in November in a collision over the interpretation of the contract.

Mullett went back to day labor, employing marble setters and polishers, from 7 to 15 in the gang. They continued at work in the Cash Room until July 1869. The only signal that the work was finished was a serene letter Mullett wrote Parry in early July. The Architect had taken on a new role. He was pleading in behalf of a master mechanic:

> By the completion of the Cash Room, Mr. Guysenback, who superintended the putting up of the marble work, is out of employment, and it occurred to me that you might desire his services. Mr. Guysenback is a hard working, industrious man, and his skill as a mechanic is sufficiently known in the very workmanlike manner in which the marble work in the Cash Room has been put in place.
>
> Should you desire to employ him I think I can induce him to go to New York, and know that you will find him a valuable assistant. Please advise me and believe me.

## VI. SUBSEQUENT IMPROVEMENTS

Long the summit of architectural perfection in the Treasury Building, the Cash Room came into the 20th century virtually unchanged. In contrast, the building had marched with the accelerating progress in technology. In spite of Greek Revival garments, the building was a bellwether in bringing electric lighting to Government. Telephones served the building in the 1880's, if not earlier as tradition likes to believe, and the elevators first carried passengers in November 1879.

Even so, the Cash Room deserves credit for having the building's first elevator. William T. Duvall, proprietor of a Georgetown foundry and machine shop, was paid $2,997.50 on January 20, 1870, for its installation. It was a hydraulic lift which carried money, not people, up and down between an adjacent room and the Adams Express Co. office on the floor below. Some few years later a stairs was laid on iron stringers to the express room for $483. In 1904, new vaults replaced the vault built in 1869 next to the Cash Room. Although Mary Clemmer Ames accorded the elevator ecstatic praise, the adjuncts were invisible to patrons. Installation of new Treasury gaslight chandeliers, each with 48 jets, was, however, a visible boon of equal benefit to clerks and customers. The greater light and larger chandeliers must have been readily perceptible and keenly appreciated by all who came to the Cash Room. The new chandeliers, "cast brass nicely finished in gold gilt," had replaced their dark bronze predecessors, one of 42 and two of 36 burners, and presumably cost $1,100, the price the manufacturer quoted in 1874 to copy them for State, War, and Navy Building. The new chandeliers were lighting the Cash Room by September 1870.

How long they hung in the room is uncertain. The probability is that they were taken down between 1903 and 1904 in the course of a comprehensive rewiring of the Treasury Building. Even an earlier date is possible in view of the makeshift lighting arrangement which appeared in the room about this time. It consisted of naked bulbs under flat but fluted reflectors suspended over the work area from wooden bars extending from the gallery. Other conical fixtures, also fluted, were mounted on the wood rim of the screen. The housing of the wiring could be turned to light the interior of the cages or the lobby, which appeared, in any event, deficient in light. Within a few years a new arrangement brightened the lobby as well as the work area with milk glass globes suspended in systematic order around the room. They hung from gracefully turned metal brackets apparently of bronze to match the balcony to which they were attached. These fixtures remained in place until 1927.

Another visible change was the application of goldleaf to the upper cornice, which Secretary of the Treasury, Hugh McCulloch, would have preferred in marble. The prospective high cost turned the builders to gypsum, and a rim of plaster shells forms the cornice. The date of the goldleafing is uncertain, but the covering, almost as a certainty, came after the room's completion. In the lists of monthly disbursements throughout the entire construction span, gold appears twice as a vehicle of disbursement but never as a purchase. Each gold disbursement was $20 in gold coin--the first "for photographic purposes," presumably to buy imported supplies, and the second undefined. In view of premiums of as much as 44-1/2 percent in dollars to meet Italian marble prices quoted in gold, the Treasury probably avoided using gold as a building material in the 1860's. By the 1880's, however, the Supervising Architect was buying goldleaf as routine painting supplies. Presumably the application came at this time, possibly a little earlier.

As the years flowed along, the Cash Room took on the likeness of an aging dowager attired in finery of an earlier time. Visitors entering the lobby must have been struck at once by the outmoded appearance of the screen of wood and the whitened sheets of translucent glass which had gone virtually unaltered since 1869. Another highly perceptible aspect was the lighting. New though it must have been in the 20th century's first decade, it was increasingly dated in appearance and effectiveness, falling behind the swiftly striding technology of lighting. Unsightly, too, was the evidence of wear on the marble flooring tiles which once had been, by specification, one inch thick. They were wearing thin, cracking and splitting. Deterioration of some kind may have been discernible in the doors. In any event they would be adjudged unsuitable for the entrance to the Treasury of the United States.

Certainly in 1916 the state of the Cash Room was so displeasing that the Treasury Department asked Congress for a remediable appropriation. Undoubtedly the request had its inspiration in the Treasurer of the United States. Consequently, the Sundry Civil Appropriation Act of June 12, 1917, contained an item of $10,000 for changes in the screen and new furniture. By the time of enactment, however, the United States was fighting in the First World War. A handful of surviving drawings hints that an early start had been in sight, but the work was shelved--for 10 years as it turned out.

In 1927, there was another appropriation in an Act of January 26. It appropriated $20,000 as, in the legislation's odd phrasing, "an additional amount for changes in screen, new furniture, etc., in Cash Room." The author of the wording may well have been Acting Supervising Architect, James L. Wetmore, the only non-architect ever to sit in the Supervising Architect's chair. He occupied it from 1915 to 1934, longer than any other person. His profession was law. He brought to the office extraordinary administrative skills acquired in a Government career which began in 1885 when he was 22. Mustached and bespectacled, Wetmore, a genial personality, possessed an enormous fund of anecdotes about the conspicuous political figures from the 1880's until his retirement, many of whom were his friends.

The assumption that Wetmore's deft hand touched up the 1927 legislation gains credence from Wetmore's response when Treasury officers questioned the use of two appropriations of 1917 and 1927 for a total of $30,000. He quieted the question in August with a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, stressing the word "additional" in the last Act and pointing to the identity of purpose in both. With face-saving agreement on the existence of "administrative difficulties," Wetmore concluded that "each appropriation is equally available for expenditure." Consolidating the money under the heading "Treasury Building, Washington, D.C.: Cash Room changes and equipment," he suggested, would resolve all difficulties. That the General Accounting Office concurred two days later suggests that Wetmore had consulted the arbiter of Government accounting and fiscal practices. In April, long before the accounting question erupted, the Supervising Architect's office had finished the Cash Room restoration plans, although so formal a name was never bestowed on the work. A month later, Cashier Charles S. Gates conveyed the unbounded approval of the Treasurer's Office to Wetmore in a letter redolent with praise. The drawings, Gates said, "received universal approval and commendation." Apparently the prospect that the improvements would become a reality at last was so overpowering that Gates could not resist ending the letter with a blissful rhetorical question":

> May I express the deep appreciation we all feel for the splendid spirit of cooperation shown by the Office of

the Supervising Architect in caring for our needs in this matter?

Undoubtedly, Wetmore's "spirit of cooperation" was worthy of appreciation, but the likelihood is that Gates was also thanking Louis A. Simon, the Treasury's Chief Architect, for the designs. A few years after taking a degree in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Simon joined the Architect's office in 1896. By 1905 he was the head of the Architectural Division, and he assumed the post of Supervising Architect in 1934 upon Wetmore's retirement. One of the office's principal draftsmen, K. O. Sonneman, was associated with Simon in the design of the new Cash Room screen.

By the time the Treasury was ready to begin soliciting bids in July, the work had been divided into a series of large and small tasks for each of which bids were invited. In the end at least eight contracts were awarded in 1927 and 1928. Bids also were taken for refinishing the bronze balcony's metalwork, but the work was abandoned due to the lack of funds. All but one of the contractors performed their services in the Cash Room. The exception was the Washington Ornamental Co. which made the models for the bronze doors and transoms and the bronzework of the new screen. Unlike the practice in Mullett's day, the restoration contractors installed or applied the materials they supplied.

The major awards went to Art Metal Construction Co. It obtained two contracts and was also low bidder for refinishing the gallery bronze. The firm's larger contract, under the general heading of "changes in the cash room," was awarded for $19,830. Installation of three bronze grille doors and transoms was the work required under the second, at $5,100. Sanitary Floors Corporation, often called Sanitary Flooring Corporation in Treasury letters, had a contract for $1,795, third in size. There were other smaller contracts for painting the ceiling, plumbing, cleaning the marble, and moving the old tellers' cages to a temporary Cash Room. The formidable task of keeping the various contractors and trades from getting entangled with each other fell to the Architect's Office in the person of Edward A. Keys, who was assigned to supervise the work. He was summoned from Annapolis where he had been superintending the construction of a Post Office building.

Art Metal was essentially a metalworking company, in steel and bronze. Its letterhead carried a line boasting that it was the "world's largest makers of steel office furniture." In spite of its specialty, its role under the larger contract resembled a present day general contractor. The firm's task took in at least nine trades, although the ornamental metalwork involved in the new screen was the largest single type of work. Keys estimated it at $8,500. The other tasks which Keys listed involved demolition and shoring, brickwork, structural steel and iron, painting

and glazing, lathing and plastering, interior marble work, cage and counter work, and electric wiring and lighting. Presumably Art Metal apportioned many tasks to subcontractors.

The chief task, aside from the screen, was the construction of a marble counter to replace the one Parry had furnished in 1868. The new counter was advanced about 20 inches into the lobby, reducing the public area. A more significant differerce was that the pedestals under the tellers' windows, which matched the pedestals under the pilasters, were not replaced. Instead, the new counter presented a flat face except for the Siena panels and moldings. The black and gold bardiglio marble slab which the builder furnished for the counter top was in sharp contrast with the white shelf on Parry's counter. When the bardiglio was put in place, the area in front of each window was rabbeted by removing marble to the depth of a quarter of an inch for the width of the window. A linoleum covering was then laid in the rabbet. Other marbles which Art Metal supplied were Champlain black for the counter base, dove gray for moldings, Siena for panels, and white and red marble for flooring stock.

The specification accorded Art Metal discretion in reusing marble from the old counter. The marble had to be refinished to remove any "distinction ... between new and old material." The flooring specification was more strict. Tiling could be reused only with Keys's permission. The discretion drew comment in the final report of Inspection Engineer, H. S. McAllister. He found a cemented patch on one Siena panel but reported that its workmanship was so superior that he was constrained to accept it, apparently with misgivings. In another panel, at the lobby's west side, old and new marbles were matched in finish but not in color--"so much so that it is quite noticeable." It was ruled acceptable within the specification. McAllister also complained that the marble jointing in the counter was not always in plumb but passed the work because matched colors concealed the defect. In contrast he offered no adverse commentary on Art Metal's flooring in the lobby, whether the stone was old or new. The use of Keene's cement, a famous 19th century material for jointing interior marble work, was required in the specification. McAllister's report noted its use and warned that painting the exposed cement behind the counter should be deferred until the surface had dried.

An odd comparability linked the 1927 contracts with those for the original Cash Room. There were two flooring contractors. Art Metal had the lobby contract; Sanitary Floors had the area behind the counter. The existence of the two restoration contracts took into account plans for a different flooring in the work area. Sanitary Floors was required to relay the flooring, in effect a subfloor, and cover it with rubber tiling. In the lobby, of course, the flooring remained black, white, and red marble, new or old.

An incidental phase of the Sanitary Floors contract brought forth a knowledgeable and informed verdict on Mullett's stonework. The associated task had to do with heating pipes in the floors and walls. The specification was written in the belief that the pipes rising in the walls were, in effect, in grooves. Instead, they were in solid brickwork, and the firm could not remove and replace the piping or make new connections with radiators without opening the walls. Their persistent refusal brought about a structural investigation in which W. C. Lyon, Assistant Superintendent of the Structural Division, had a leading role. His report, typed in the practice of the day as an endorsement on the contractor's letter, declared:

> The marble standing wall-finish in the "Cash Room" composed of thin slabs of marble backed with brick for the pedestals which are surmounted with monolithic marble pilasters supporting the cornice and balcony over the same at the second floor level, is "applied" (simply butting) and not [an] integral part of the enclosing walls of the room, more or less flimsy in character.

Lyon warned that a renewal of the piping would entail foreseeable heavy costs, pointing out that the work would require cutting out the brickwork back of the pedestals to such an extent as to endanger the safety of the marble work, which could be avoided only by shoring up the cornice and taking down the pilasters and pedestals to be replaced after the renewal of the piping. Sanitary Floors was relieved of this aspect of the work and went forward with laying the rubber tile.

The new screen of bronze and clear glass was erected on the counter as a preliminary to installing the new lighting. The hanging fixtures had all been removed, including the curved bracket arms by which they were suspended from the gallery railing. In their place Art Metal put in indirect lighting behind the railing and in a trough behind the decorated bronze border at the top of the screen.

The Treasurer's Cashier and his staff gladly freed the Cash Room for its restoration--for the installations and for painting and cleaning. On the last day of 1927, the old cages were taken to the floor below never to be returned. They were mounted on a temporary counter in rooms then numbered 29-31. The Cashier and the tellers trooped back to the restored room on March 22, 1928. They found new cages, a new counter, new flooring, new lighting, and even two new guard rails--the room's third set since 1869. (A companion guard rail was erected about 10 years later, giving the room three instead of two.) The ceiling had been painted. The marble walls had been cleaned three consecutive times. The last washing was put off until most of the other trades had left, thereby avoiding a deposit of dust on the clean walls. The

balcony, taken down while the walls were being cleaned, had been put back--cleaned, but not refinished. The restored Cash Room included a pair of pilasters which had for the first time been extended to their full length. The removal of old equipment, presumably the counter, had exposed marble work which had gone unfinished since 1869. Using marble from the old counter, the contractor completed the unfinished work. The discovery apparently denies the assumption that Mullett had stretched a marble skin over all the brickwork of the Cash Room's first story before Grant's Inauguration Ball. Perhaps the painting "Peace" also served as a cover for naked brick.

Hanging the trio of handsome grille doors and their transoms of straw-colored bronze was the last step. From the beginning questions had beset the manufacture of the doors--their hinging, variations in the height of the frames, and the use of bronze tubing instead of bronze bars. These were all resolved by discussion, but a new kind of handicap took form late in January. Art Metal discovered that the model for the center pair of doors was defective. Two vertical rows of Indian profiles were facing in the same direction instead of facing each other, toward the center. The model was corrected and delivered to Art Metal a month later. Thereafter the work moved forward with casting, fabrication, and delivery to the Treasury Building in late April.

The Cash Room, of course, was occupied. Indeed, business was going on as usual--but in a bright, new environment. Even so, Art Metal went forward with the delicate and exacting work of installing the hinges and hanging the doors. The transoms were emplaced without technical frustrations. The most discouraging discovery was the lack of precision with which the cast iron architraves around the doorways, dating from the north wing's construction, lined up with the equally old marble work. As a result there was a visible absence of uniformity in the spaces between the doors and the frames. The contractor's struggle with the uneven spacing moved Construction Engineer Keys to sympathy. In his final report, he recommended acceptance of the work on May 10 in spite of the flaw.

So this became the date of completion. Apparently, however, the reinvigorated Cash Room, with its new charm, could enlist the persistent endeavors of contractors, Treasury constructors, and workmen to perfect its surroundings. In the end they succeeded. A new endorsement appeared on May 28 on Keys's final report in handwriting with initials resembling those of the structural engineer, W. C. Lyon, who had probed behind Mullett's marble. Lyon's statement, if it were his, was brief: "... doors and frames have been adjusted." The Cash Room restoration stood complete nearly three weeks after the official date.

RESOURCES

1. FOREWORD: "THE CASH ROOM" by the Office of the Curator and Preservation Office, Department of the Treasury, 1988.

2. **MAIN TEXT:** "THE CASH ROOM: alias Treasury of the U.S., An Architectural History" by Donald J. Lehman, dated July 24, 1975.

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